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BLOOD NATIVITY

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An Introductory Story for *Vampire™: The Masquerade™*

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A Story for Vampire: The Masquerade

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INTRODUCTION

This is a start-up story for a troupe just learning to play *Vampire*™. It will not only introduce you to the basic rules of the game, but also the flavor and feel of the Gothic-Punk™ world of the modern vampire. Because of the intimate nature of the trials that confront the characters, the story is best suited to a group of three or four players and a Storyteller. Larger groups will find that characters are often denied the time and attention they deserve in this world of personal horror.

We will be starting this story at a point before the characters have become Kindred. You might want to spend an entire session preparing the characters with your players, getting into detail about what kind of human beings they are and what kinds of lives they lead, before you get involved in the beginning of this story. Your players should feel free to examine clans and Disciplines, but explain to them that they will be beginning the game as mortals. You, as the Storyteller, should be familiar with the de-

sires and motivations of each of your players so that you can provide a satisfying lead-in to their vampiric experiences.

We strongly recommend that you go through the Storytelling chapter of the *Vampire* rule book before running this story, in order to understand the flow that must occur in each scene. While this story is written as set in Cleveland, you should be easily able to set it in whatever city you choose for your Chronicle.

Creating Characters

The Character Creation Outline on page 42 of *Vampire* is a very useful reference for the creation of new characters. However, a few clarifications need to be made. First of all, for this adventure we recommend that the players do not choose a clan, as they will be chosen by a specific Sire during the roleplaying of the story. If they insist on choosing a clan, it is then incumbent upon the Storyteller to adjust the personality of the potential Sire to fit that of the character. (In other words, make sure the Vampire representing the desired clan will be attracted to the player character.) Also, in **Step One**, a character's Nature and Demeanor may be the same, though it might be more interesting if they are different. (See pages 44-45 in *Vampire*.)

In **Step Two**, remember to have the players fill in their one free dot in each

Attribute (as per page 46 of *Vampire*) before they prioritize and allocate their extra dots (see page 35 for an example). When they prioritize, remind the players that the extra dots can be allocated within each category (i.e., seven dots in Mental Attributes if they wish) rather than confined to only one Attribute (they cannot place all seven in the Perception Attribute).

In **Step Four**, skip the Disciplines as far as this story is concerned. These vampiric abilities as well as any vampiric background traits should be chosen after the Embrace, in Scene Two. (See pages 48-49 in *Vampire*.) As far as Virtues are concerned, there is a discrepancy between the rules (which state you have 7 dots) and the character sheet (which states you have 10 dots). We have found that 10 seems to be more playable, but whichever you choose make sure all players use the same number.

In **Step Five** there are more discrepancies, this time between the Character Creation Outline on page 42 and the rules on page 50 of *Vampire*. Use the rules where Willpower equals the Courage rating, and Humanity is the sum of the Conscience and Self-Control ratings. For the purposes of this story, the characters will begin with only one dot of Blood Pool. Finally, remind the players that when spending Freebie Points, one dot of any Discipline costs 7 points, Attributes cost 5 points, Abilities and Virtues cost 2 points, and Backgrounds, Willpower and Humanity cost one point. Disciplines will not be chosen until after the Embrace. Remember to have the players recalculate their Willpower and Humanity after spending their Freebie Points if they have changed any of their Virtues. Willpower and Humanity scores greater than ten are not allowed.

Terms in the Gothic-Punk World

Anarch	vampiric rebels who do not follow the Camarilla
Beast	the urges which encourage a Vampire to forsake Humanity
Blood Bond	the receiving of blood from one acknowledged to be your superior, giving them mystical power over you
Camarilla	the largest political Sect of Vampires
Childe	derogatory term for Neonate, or the Progeny of a Vampire
Clan	group of Vampire who share common bloodlines, Disciplines or outlooks
Domain	the Prince's Turf
Embrace, Kiss	the creation of a Vampire
Ghoul	a mortal who drinks vampiric blood and has limited vampiric powers
Kindred	Vampires
Masquerade	actions which hide Vampires from mortal society
Neonate	a young or newly created Vampire, <i>Fledgling</i>
Prince	the Camarilla ruler of the city
Sire	a Vampire who creates another
Turf	an area assigned to a Vampire or group of Vampires, in which they can feed
Vessel	source of blood
Vitae	blood

(For more information, see the Lexicon in *Vampire*, pages 193-199)

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Listed below you will find the major players in this story. The Sires have been fleshed out only as much as necessary for this story, though it stands to reason that Kindred of their ages and generations would have many more abilities than listed here. If you find that these characters are popping up frequently in your Chronicle, feel free to add some appropriate Abilities to fully flesh them out. The following descriptions describe their current Abilities and motivations.

Burton Brooks

Clan: Toreador
Nature: Conniver
Demeanor: Traditionalist
Born: Early 1900's
Apparent age: late 40's
Generation: 10th

Description: Burton is a large, burly looking man, with unnatural grace and quickness. He has an even, dark brown complexion and light brown eyes, and wears his hair cut very close to his head. His fingers are slender and nimble, and have brought him much attention when he plays guitar or saxophone in his club.

Attributes: Strength [3], Dexterity [4], Stamina [4], Charisma [3], Manipulation [3], Appearance [4], Perception [2], Intelligence [3], Wits [4]

Abilities: Alertness [4], Brawl [2], Dodge [4], Empathy [3], Intimidation [2], Leadership [2], Streetwise [3], Drive [2], Etiquette [3], Firearms [1], Music [4], Finance [3]

Backgrounds: Allies [1], Contacts [3], Fame [1], Retainers [2], Status [3]

Disciplines: Presence [4], Celerity [3], Auspex [2]

Burton runs Elwood's, a blues club. A flamboyant and personable man, Burton enjoys the club atmosphere. His club is known for having a constant stream of wonderful new performers, since there is always someone new coming along to impress him with their skills. Burton is often seen jamming in the club after closing, with the performer of the week, but he quickly loses interest in his discoveries. He dresses in the latest fashions, usually incorporating his favorite colors of turquoise, maroon and goldenrod. He favors silks and leathers (when they are in style).

Burton has become involved with the council because of the popularity of his club. He greatly resents the powers of the city using his club for their own power games, and is

quite interested in finding a true artist to join him in his vampiric lifestyle.

Roleplaying Tips: Be as friendly and personable as you can, without ever smiling too broadly. When talking about musical arts, become a very serious listener, but immediately dismiss most of what was said as "craft, not art." Make lots of hand and (appropriate) finger gestures

Jean-Michel du Pont-Ville

Clan: Tremere
Nature: Deviant
Demeanor: Traditionalist
Embraced: 1805
Apparent age: late 20's
Generation: 10th

Description: Monsieur du Pont-Ville is always impeccably and appropriately attired in the manner of an upperclass nobleman of the early nineteenth century. His dress almost always includes tails and a ruffled collar decorating his suits which are made of only the finest material available. His hair is very curly, closely cut, and even more black than his very dark skin. He has broad features and stands an inch or two under six feet tall. His skin bears scars from the overseers' lash in his mortal days, as well as markings from his initiation ceremony carried out according to his west African tribal traditions by fellow slaves. He speaks with a very proper British accent.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [3], Stamina [3], Charisma [3], Manipulation [4], Appearance [2], Perception [3], Intelligence [4], Wits [4]

Abilities: Alertness [2], Athletics [2], Dodge [3], Leadership [2], Subterfuge [4], Etiquette [4], Melee (saber) [3], Stealth [3], Bureaucracy [4], Finance [2], Linguistics [3], Occult (voodoo) [4], Science [3]

Backgrounds: Allies [3], Contacts [3], Herd [2], Resources [3]

Disciplines: Thaumaturgy [4] (Blood), Dominate [3], Auspex [3]

His sire, Lord Graythwaite was a European nobleman who came to the Caribbean to get away from the oppressive influence of the Church in Europe and explore the possibilities of the supernatural in America. Jean-Michel was Graythwaite's slave but was not grossly

mistreated. He served as his master's personal attendant at a magnificent plantation in Barbados. His Lord found him practicing Voodoo magics, and was intrigued by the prospect of Embracing him into the Tremere traditions because of his magical Gift. Jean-Michel was therefore educated thoroughly, even studying in Europe before his Embrace.

This Tremere will not spontaneously create any Neonates.

Jean-Michel is involved with the council because of his love for control. He is keeping a close eye on Isabella, who appears to be running things to his liking, for now. If, at any point she strays from the path which he considers to be correct, he will step in with manipulations of his own to steer things back on course. His ideal outcome would be to place a puppet of his own in the high ranks of vampiric politics.

Roleplaying Tips: Think stiff upper lip. Speak with even tones and clipped sentences. Is generally politely condescending to all but the most respectable people he meets. Is very stayed and calm, he never gets excited except when discussing the powers of voodoo.

Isabella Balboa Garcia Mendes

Clan: Ventrue
Nature: Traditionalist
Demeanor: Director
Born: 1930
Apparent age: Early 20's
Generation: 8th

Description: Isabella has beautiful, deep-set brown eyes. That is, if you can see them — she rarely makes eye contact with anyone, except when trying to Dominate, which she does only rarely. He features are otherwise rather plain. She ties her straight, dark hair in a loose bun at the back of her neck and wears conservative and rather old fashioned long dresses. One examining her closely will notice she wears a tiny, gold cross on a delicate chain around her neck.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [3], Stamina [2], Charisma [2], Manipulation [4], Appearance [3], Perception [3], Intelligence [4], Wits [4]

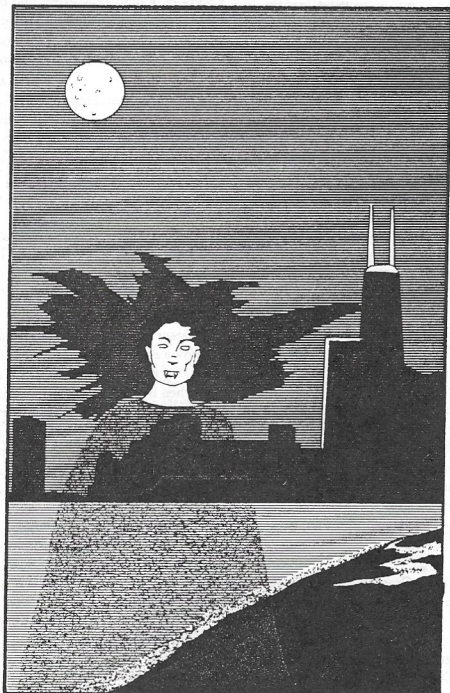
Abilities: Dodge [3], Empathy [3], Leadership [4], Subterfuge [4], Etiquette [3] Music [2], Survival [3], Bureaucracy [3], Computer [2], Politics [3]

Backgrounds: Allies [2], Contacts [2], Herd [3], Mentor [2], Retainers [2]

Disciplines: Dominate [3], Fortitude [2], Presence [4]

The driving force behind the council, Isabella was witness to the splintering of the Camarilla in Havana and is determined not to let that happen in her new home. An attractive young woman, she dresses conservatively and unprovocatively. Isabella has adapted many of the rituals of her once strong Catholic faith into her vampiric existence (such as no "meat" [feeding] on Friday) and will even attend the occasional midnight mass in the winter, when night falls early.

Roleplaying tips: Isabella is a strong minded woman, but presents herself in a refined and almost demure way. Speak softly, and a little thickly, as if the English words you are using aren't quite natural to your tongue. Keep your hands folded while you speak, never gesturing. Only if things get wildly out of hand should you break this pose, crossing yourself and rolling your eyes heavenward.



Dahlili Mozambique (Delores Washington)

Clan: Brujah

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Rebel

Born: early 1950's

Apparent age: twentysomething

Generation: 10th

Description: Dahlili dresses in torn and patched jeans, that are just a bit too wide at the feet, and a battered black leather jacket thrown over a tie-dyed T-shirt emblazoned with a peace sign. Her hair is worn in a large afro, though she keeps it away from her face with an elasticized head band. Her eyes are always moving, as she is always on the alert for trouble, and although her face isn't striking in its beauty, her proud stature increases her presence.

Attributes: Strength [3], Dexterity [4], Stamina [4], Charisma [3], Manipulation [3], Appearance [3], Perception [3], Intelligence [3], Wits [4]

Abilities: Athletics [2], Brawl [3], Dodge [3], Intimidation [2], Leadership [1], Streetwise [3], Subterfuge [2], Drive [3], Firearms [3], Repair [3], Stealth [2], Investigation [4], Law [2], Politics [4]

Backgrounds: Allies [1], Contacts [2], Herd [3], Resources [2], Status [1]

Disciplines: Celerity [4], Potence [3], Presence [2]

Born Delores Washington, Dahlili changed her name while in college to reflect newfound pride in her heritage. She will react disdainfully to strangers who do not call her Dahlili, although for some unspoken reason, Burton refuses to call her anything but Dolly. A Malcolm X follower, Dahlili was at a fevered pitch to throw off white oppression, when she discovered the true meaning of Empowerment. She is one of the few who *desired* the Embrace. She found a familiar message in the ideology of the Brujah, and has become a trusted ally of several Anarchs in the city. Even though she has no desire to dress the part of the Punk, she more than compensates in her attitude. Dahlili spends a lot of time at the reggae bar, Jade Holiday, but has lots of contacts and is knowledgeable about the vampiric world. She is the one who went to Isabella when the Lt.'s game was uncovered.

Now, rather than fear white oppression, she fears that the disunity among the Vampires of the city will lead to mortal oppression and eventual extinction for all Kindred.

Roleplaying tips: Dahlili was a feminist and black supremacist, now a vampire supremacist. Though she usually won't go on a rampage about her views, she will talk about Black Power, Black Pride and oppression in nearly every circumstance. A blatant racist or male chauvinist might feel the lash of her fiery tongue, but otherwise she is patiently waiting for the fall of the oppressors. Emphasize your remarks by gesturing with your fist.

R. J.

Clan: Gangrel

Nature: Plotter

Demeanor: Loner

Born: late 1930's

Apparent age: Early 30's

Generation: 10th

Description: R. J. has vividly blue eyes fringed in straight, dark lashes and dark blonde hair that curls slightly just below his shirt collar. His face is slightly weathered looking, and he has little "laugh lines" around his eyes, though they could be from heavy thinking as well. He dresses in blue jeans, sneakers and long-sleeved corduroy shirts, rolled up at the forearm. He usually has a cigarette in one hand and a news-

paper in the other, and breathes cigarette smoke out his nose while he reads. Surprisingly, he smells slightly of cheap cologne and sweat, more than smoke. He is adept at dealing with people, but he usually remains quietly in the background unless the conversation is particularly interesting to him. He is a master at ignoring that which doesn't impress or concern him.

Attributes: Strength [3], Dexterity [3], Stamina [4], Charisma [3], Manipulation [4], Appearance [3], Perception [4], Intelligence [3], Wits [4]

Abilities: Alertness [3], Athletics [4], Brawl [3], Dodge [4], Empathy [2], Leadership [1], Subterfuge [2], Animal Ken [3], Drive [3], Firearms [3], Melee [2], Stealth [2], Survival [3], Investigation [2], Medicine [1], Occult [3]

Backgrounds: Allies [1], Contacts [1], Herd [1], Mentor [2], Resources [2]

Disciplines: Protean [4], Celerity [3], Animality [3]

No one knows why this stoic survivor is called R. J., but it is a name he accepts and he offers no other. Occasionally smoothing his hair while he talks is the only nervous gesture he makes. Otherwise this Kindred appears totally at ease and in control.

He carries a large black bag on his shoulder wherever he goes. It is falsely rumored that this many pouched bag contains all his worldly possessions. While this isn't true, it does contain anything he might need if forced to take flight: a change of clothes, some cash, a Swiss Army knife (with all the options), a current copy of *The Sporting News*, and the cigarettes he still smokes. "Why quit now? They're not going to kill me!" He is an avid sports fan. He is known by the regulars at the YMCA, and his only nightly ritual is pouring over the early edition sports page before retiring. R. J. is satisfied to live within this sphere, but can be drawn out when someone threatens his lifestyle, such as now.

R. J. is the only Vampire on the Council who has much contact with Elmer, since they frequent the same working-class sports bar, Muldoon's. While R. J. avoids "idiots" in general, he knows better than to snub the powerful Nosferatu. Besides, Elmer is a Cavaliers fan, and not entirely intolerable. R. J. will be intrigued by any mortals who show signs of being true survivors.

Roleplaying Tips: Sit back in your chair, and be half-concerned with reading the sports page while talking to people. Occasionally gesture with your cigarette, or run your free hand through your hair. Try to appear generally unconcerned with "serious" matters being discussed around you, but not unfriendly or haughty. If the talk shifts to sports, become more ani-

mated: this is something you know and care about! If the conversation turns to the manipulating upper level Vampires, speak indignantly about the individual's right to choose and their responsibility for their own life.

Colette

Clan: Malkavian

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Born: unknown

Apparent age: mid-30's

Generation: 10th

Description: Colette is an average looking, blue-eyed blonde. Her face is typically somewhat morose, except on the occasions when something new intrigues her. Then she lights up, and stares with unnerving intensity into the depths of the person or situation that has captured her interest. On most occasions, Colette is gloomy and her thin lips are pressed in a tight frown.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [2], Stamina [2], Charisma [3], Manipulation [4], Appearance [2], Perception [4], Intelligence [3], Wits [2]

Abilities: Acting [3], Alertness [3], Dodge [2], Leadership [2], Subterfuge [3], Drive [2], Firearms [2], Repair [3], Survival [4], Computer [3], Finance [2], Linguistics [2], Occult [3]

Backgrounds: Herd [2], Influence [2], Resources [4], Status [1]

Disciplines: Auspex [4], Obfuscate [4], Dominate [3]

Derangement: Utterly existential

Colette is a manic-depressive philosopher, who believes that this is all her own personal nightmare. An existentialist who believes everyone around her has been created by her own mind, Colette alternately becomes hysterically excited by her own brilliance and weepy at the implications of being so alone. She is keenly interested in each new thing that is "created" around her and constantly theorizes about why she has created what she sees. She will be briefly enthralled with anyone who tries to comfort her until she "figures them out". "Oh, hello," she'll say with wide, interested eyes, "And why have you come into my little plot, I wonder? What is your purpose?" She is familiar with Dahlili from the counter-culture club, Jade Holiday, which serves as hunting grounds for both.

Roleplaying Tips: Be very morose until someone attempts to talk with you. Each time

you meet a new person, perk up a little. Make your eyes wide as they speak, then become contemplative. What did they really mean by that?

Elmer Polanski

Clan: Nosferatu

Nature: Curmudgeon

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Born: 1907

Apparent Age: around fifty years old

Generation: 7th

Description: Can you say hideous? Actually he hides it well, as he comes across as a beer-bellied, swaggering, middle-aged man with only a little silver hair left. As long as he stays in the shadows, he can get by, but the light shows how disfigured his face and head are. His "beer-belly" isn't due to his excessive consumption as much as it's another hideous disfigurement, although one that fits in well with the society around him.

Attributes: Strength [4], Dexterity [4], Stamina [4], Charisma [1], Manipulation [1], Appearance [3], Perception [4], Intelligence [2], Wits [4]

Abilities: Alertness [4], Athletics [3], Brawl [3], Dodge [4], Intimidation [4], Streetwise [3], Drive [2], Melee [2], Security [2], Stealth [4], Survival [4], Investigation [4], Law [2], Occult [2]

Backgrounds: Allies [4], Contacts [4], Herd [1], Mentor [2], Status [1]

Disciplines: Obfuscate [5], Animality [2], Potence [2]

A frequenter of Muldoon's, Elmer uses his high Obfuscate score to appear less hideous than he really is. A noxious cigar perpetually perched between his fangs, he will occasionally spit out a rude or obnoxious comment from his hiding place in a low-lit booth or other darkened corner. In fact, he prefers not to be in the light at all, and sits under a wide brimmed hat with the collar of his coat upturned to hide himself. He realizes his obfuscate makes him nearly invisible to the mortals, but he has never grown comfortable with his ugliness.

Elmer doesn't want to be a part of the Council, but has been called in as a source of information (and to gather a little of his own). He is quite familiar with the Gangrel, R. J., and has come to this Council out of familiarity for R. J. alone. A prejudiced man, he is not comfortable at all with the thought that this minority-led group might come to some form of power. He's come to keep an eye on things.

The Ghouls of the Sunset Club

Jon D. Evans

Born: 1969

Apparent Age: early 20's

Description: Jon is tall and lanky, with long, curly, dark brown hair and a well-trimmed beard. At almost 6'5", he is physically imposing enough to handle himself well as a bartender, even though he is rather skinny.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [2], Stamina [2], Charisma [3], Manipulation [3], Appearance [3], Perception [2], Intelligence [3], Wits [2]

Abilities: Acting [2], Brawl [1], Empathy [3], Leadership [2], Streetwise [2], Drive [2], Etiquette [2], Repair (bar equipment) [3], Politics [1]

Disciplines: Potence (1), Dominate (2)—very rare in Ghouls, but Jon seems to have a natural aptitude for it.

Jon is a ladies man (or ladies Ghoul?) and feeds excessively off of Isabella and Colette. This may be one reason he is able to Dominate (though his Charisma and Manipulation Attributes also help). He is constantly smoking cigarettes behind the bar, and has been known as a reliable supplier for some time now. Colette enjoys feeding on Jon when he is high, as this gives her some relief from her mania. Because Colette and Jon feed off of each other, their relationship is very intense. She also enjoys discussing existential philosophy with him while Isabella just uses him for the sensual experience, which Jon doesn't mind, either! Despite all of this, Jon is Blood Bound to Isabella, as she got to him first.

Cliff Stiles

Born: 1958

Apparent Age: Late 20's

Description: Cliff is pretty short (5'8"), at least compared to Albert and Jon. He has light brown, wavy hair and has a slight build. He usually wears horn-rimmed glasses and a very nice suit.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [3], Stamina [2], Charisma [3], Manipulation [2], Appearance [2], Perception [2], Intelligence [3], Wits [3]

Abilities: Alertness [3], Athletics [2], Brawl [2], Dodge [3], Empathy [1], Firearms [2], Etiquette [3], Finance [2], Politics [2]

Disciplines: Celerity [2], Fortitude [1], Potence [1]

Despite his outwardly respectable and proper demeanor, Cliff actually interacts a great deal with Dahlili (and feeds from her, hence his Disciplines). She sees him as an excellent form through whom she can lure establishment figures into the club and deal with them. Isabella, always with an eye on control, regularly feeds all the Ghouls, and Cliff is Bound to her. Cliff is an excellent organizer and a personable host for the club. However, he is also wiry and not so shabby of a combatant, if it ever came down to that.

Albert Schmidt

Born: 1947

Apparent Age: Mid-20's

Description: Can you say imposing? How about 6'7", very stocky and very well-built. This man is a tank and there is little or no getting around him, especially if he is standing in the doorway (as the characters will see when they enter the club). He has a dark, curly beard (which hides his kind face) and long, dark hair which is thinning on top (that is, if you could actually see the top of his head).

Attributes: Strength [4], Dexterity [2], Stamina [2], Charisma [2], Manipulation [2], Appearance [2], Perception [2], Intelligence [3], Wits [3]

Abilities: Brawl [3], Empathy [2], Intimidation [3], Streetwise [3], Repair [3], Security [2]

Disciplines: Fortitude (like he needs it) [3], Potence [3]

Albert has been around awhile, as the Vampires find a reliable retainer! As Kindred are so vulnerable during the day, many of them have loyal Ghouls to protect themselves. Albert did so loyally for his creator until he died in a mysterious fire one night. Isabella, quick to seize an opportunity, immediately took Albert in and Bound him to her (or so she thought). Albert is actually bound to Jean-Michel, who lets him stay and watch over Isabella. M. du Pont-Ville plans to keep Albert as an ace in the hole and use him only when things go very badly or if Isabella can't be trusted.

Despite his size, strength and ability, Albert is actually a very kind hearted soul who feels the need to nurture and protect those around him, especially if they appear to be weak at all. He could be an excellent ally of the players if they come across to him as responsible, compassionate and humane individuals. People who come across as jerks, however, are in trouble.

The Anarchs

Snarl

Clan: Brujah

Nature: Deviant

Demeanor: Rebel

Apparent Age: 19 or 20

Description: Ratty, unkempt dark brown hair falls over his greenish eyes and pale, dirty face. Snarl is an unhealthy-looking boy, but due to his vampiric powers, he can be quite a match for the local punks and Neonates. He dresses in the gang's colors and holds sway over many of the local hoods. He carries a sharpened stake in a sling over his shoulder.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [3], Stamina [2], Charisma [2], Manipulation [4], Appearance [2], Perception [2], Intelligence [2], Wits [3]

Abilities: Alertness [3], Brawl [3], Dodge [3], Streetwise [2], Melee (stake) [3], Stealth [2], Law [1]

Disciplines: Celerity [1], Potence [1], Presence [3]

Tim Pavlicek

Clan: Brujah

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Loner

Apparent Age: 17 or 18

Description: Tim wears his hair in a marine-style crew cut, and dresses in steel-toed boots and torn blue jeans. He wears the gang's colors in T-shirts and bandanas, and carries a chain hooked to his belt, which he uses in fights. He also carries a sharpened stake in a sling over his shoulder.

Attributes: Strength [2], Dexterity [3], Stamina [2], Charisma [2], Manipulation [2], Appearance [2], Perception [2], Intelligence [2], Wits [2]

Abilities: Alertness [2], Brawl [3], Dodge [3], Streetwise [2], Melee (chain) [3], Stealth [2], Survival [1]

Disciplines: Celerity [2], Potence [1], Presence [1]

PRELUDE: STORYTELLER'S INFORMATION

What has Gone Before

Much of what has gone on before the characters are Embraced will only be revealed to them if you decide to use the background information presented here in your Chronicle. To reveal too much of the internal struggles of the Vampires and the politics of the city would only overwhelm characters who have just undergone the Change.

The Union Council is still an informal organization. It consists of a group of Kindred loyal to the Camarilla (see pages 180-182 in *Vampire*), yet wary of its political machinations. Cleveland is ruled by a Prince (Bartholomew) who theoretically presides over it's four territorial Lieutenants (Charbonneau, Patrice, Jackson and Ellis). The Lieutenants are aggressively political, always trying to one-up each other and the Prince, thereby increasing their own power and prestige within the Camarilla. To do this they must keep close watch on comings and goings within their territory. They use whatever means necessary to jockey for

position within the power structure of Cleveland, and their underlings, of course, do most of their dirty work for them.

While, in some ways, the Camarilla of Cleveland is very divided along these political lines, many issues divide and unite the Kindred in different ways. Clan loyalty, for example, cuts sharply across the artificial lines drawn by the Lieutenants. Kindred do have interests other than blood, once their Hunger is temporarily satiated. Some enjoy the company of their peers, and social clubs are easily established fronts for vampiric gatherings. Three such clubs figured prominently in the organization of



the Union Council of Cleveland. The Union Council has not petitioned to Bartholomew for recognition, since his Lieutenants are behind the troubles the clubs are having.

Dahlili was the first to put together the game being played by the Lieutenants. Through her Anarch contacts, she learned that Kindred loyal to the Lieutenants were at each of the clubs just before trouble erupted. Through some investigation of her own, she discovered that each club was in an area overseen by a different Lieutenant. Each club also attracted Kindred from various areas of the city. By breaking down the artificial lines drawn by vampiric officials, the clubs were seen as a threat to the control the Lieutenants imposed on their areas.

The plan was to keep the elder vampiric club owners and frequenters preoccupied with the threat of breaking the Masquerade (through "Anarch" confrontations, staged by one or the other of the Lieutenants) so the boundary-crossing Kindred would be more inclined to stay on their home turf. What the Lieutenants didn't consider was that not all Kindred were as concerned with power as they were, and that these gathering places served as social centers and safe areas to feed rather than hotbeds of anarchy and rebellious political plotting. Had they left the clubbers alone, probably nothing would have come of it. Instead, the Lieutenants created exactly what they feared.

and questioned Burton about his club. (Colette had recently begun frequenting Jade, in hopes of understanding her life through rebellion.)

Dahlili then investigated through her Anarch contacts, who claimed no responsibility, but had heard of similar happenings between some working-class neighborhood vampires at a bar called Muldoon's. After gathering together in neutral territory (the Sunset Club) the members of the "Union Council" decided that to maintain some sort of independence, they'd best unite for support. By creating some loyal Neonates to protect and support their positions, they hope to remain as a stable core while the upper levels and Anarchs continue to fight each other. All of these potential Sires are creating Neonates for the first time, and are actually quite naive about the process.

It is an elite club and a step up the social ladder; a teenager may think their favorite singer/actor will be there. This "hook" can be introduced in character generation or briefing or could simply be spelled out in an extra note on the back of the invitation. If the character is too tough or very resistant to the idea of attending, Jon was told to plant a suggestion that they come (using the Dominate Discipline) when he delivered the note.

The Dominate Discipline

In order for a character to use the Dominate Discipline, eye contact must be made. Once established, someone with one dot in Dominate can give one word Commands to others

which they must obey (as long as the target does not have more potent blood than the Dominator). With two dots, suggestions may be planted within a conversation. (See pages 96-97 in *Vampire*.) In this situation, you may want to describe Jon (see Character Appendix) as he delivers the invitation and strongly suggests the character comes to the party as he will enjoy himself tremendously.

An Invitation

The Characters will receive an invitation to the Sunset club for next Sunday night. It will be hand delivered by Jon, a ghoulish who works at the club. The Storyteller should encourage the character to attend by devising a "hook" which would make the character interested in the evening—i.e., a drug dealer may hear there is a potential for a huge buy here; a socialite thinks

The Politics of the Kindred

This story centers around the activities of the Camarilla, the largest organization of Vampires in the world. Similar to the Mafia in its structure, the Camarilla fights to maintain and preserve the Masquerade at almost any cost. It is organized along geographic lines with a Prince ruling over each city, and "trusted" Lieutenants in power beneath the Prince. The Camarilla of Cleveland are a rather blood-thirsty lot, with each of the Lieutenants wanting to be the one to topple the Prince and establish a new order.

Burton's Blues club (Elwood's) attracts a great many mortals and Kindred alike. Weekends are packed. Recently, troubles have arisen, as "punks" (Charbonneau's men posing as Anarchs) began harassing the regulars at Elwood's as they left the club.

Burton retaliated by going down to Jade Holiday (the counter-culture club) to make some accusations of his own. Harsh words were exchanged between Burton and Dahlili, who defended her Anarch friends. Colette was thrilled at the new scenario she'd "created" for herself

The Union Council of Cleveland requests the honor of your presence for an evening of culinary and social delights at the Sunset Club, 11550 S. Crawford Avenue, at 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. Please indicate your choice of menu and beverage with your RSVP. Our skilled staff has been instructed to fulfill your culinary requests to your exact specifications, at our expense. Please present your original invitation at the door, and as seating is limited, the addressee alone can be accommodated on this night. We look forward to the pleasure of your company.

As there is an open bar and limited parking, a car will be sent to escort you to our doors and will arrive at your address at 7:30 P.M.

SCENE ONE: The Sunset Club

The first scene your players' characters will be involved in is the dinner at the club. As each character arrives they will be seated at a single table reserved for the guests. There are two tables and several booths. To preserve the illusion that this is a dinner engagement, several of the Vampires will be seated at the other tables and booths which will be scattered with the remains of what appears to have been a full course steak dinner. Some of the Elders (in this case, meaning the potential Sires) may even be sipping a red beverage from expensive looking wine glasses (this is merely for appearances, since they will have to drain their Neonates when the time comes). If the characters question this arrangement, they will be told that there were invitations for 7:00, 7:30 and 8:00, to insure that everyone received the proper attention.

The characters will be allowed to eat their dinners in peace, and will not be approached by the Vampires, unless they begin to question the other "guests" about who rented this place for the evening.

Plot

The characters should not be clued in that there is anything more unusual about this dinner party than the mysterious "Union Council," their anonymous benefactor. The Vampires don't intend to let on that they are anything but human, for now. The idea is to allow the players time to get into character, give them a hint that everything is not what it seems, and let them take it from there, with the emphasis on roleplaying.

The characters have been chosen, for one reason or another, as potential Kindred and Children for the Vampires of the Union Council. The purpose of the dinner is to give the Vampires a chance to examine these potential Neonates and determine if one of them in particular is to their liking. Each Vampire has her or his own criteria for choosing a potential Neonate (see Character section).

Once the Storyteller has determined that each character has been selected by at least one Vampire, the scene can be wrapped up at any time. However, if the players are exploring their characters, interacting with the people around them, and (hopefully) enjoying themselves, feel free to continue as long as you see fit.

It is possible that the characters could discover the purpose of the evening. A very inquisitive character may discover that the fine "wine" the Vampires are sipping is really blood. Characters who are actively seeking the Kindred may be told the truth when and if a prospective sire chooses them as a Neonate. Those who have expressed an interest in joining the immortals should be taken aside by their prospective Sires, thereby beginning the all-important interaction between them, and then Embraced privately. Chances are, however, that the characters will either not know of the Kindred or will not have expressed to the Storyteller an inkling to join them. In this case, these characters will be Embraced after Delores' welcoming speech at the end of the scene.

Setting

The dinner and party are to be held at the Sunset Club. Located in the southwestern suburbs of Cleveland, the gathering place for the Union Council is not located within the Turf any of the Lieutenants, and is therefore a neutral meeting site. Twenty years ago, the club was quite something, hosting many fancy weddings, company parties and high school proms. Today, however, the club has become a cheap venue for small-time rock n' roll bands. It is perfect for the Union Council as the rundown exterior keeps away nosy neighbors while the interior certainly has the potential to be restored to its former glory.

As the characters approach the 11550 S. Crawford Avenue, they will see a run-down, half-lit neon sign spelling out The Sunset Club in red letters. The sign post is covered with flashing lightbulbs (Las Vegas style), though less than half of these white lights actually work anymore. The parking lot is cracked and filled with weeds and litter, and the brick and stone building looks drab and gloomy. It once was a country club, but the golf course was sold years ago, and a subdivision was built on the land. Both the club and the subdivision have gone down hill ever since.

The inside of the Sunset Club is a strange mixture of the new and old. The front doors lead past the front offices into a foyer. This entry room has a carpeted floor (which used to be plush but has been trodden upon with years of wear), faded muralled walls and three doorways across the room with chipped but ornately

carved wooden frames. Straight across from the entrance lies what formerly was the Grand Ballroom. Its hard-wood dance floor has been replaced with a sloped, rubberized floor leading down to a seedy stage. On Friday and Saturday nights, the management packs in many hyper young fans to see local talent bang out very loud rock music in this hall. The walls have been painted dark, flat colors to focus attention upon the stage.

To the right, a second door leads from foyer into the bar area. The center of the room contains a huge, square, well-stocked bar, brimming with glasses and bottles of all types—this is the bread and butter of the club. Going through the bar room, one can enter a large game room with pool tables and dart machines located therein. The game room has been refurbished and has been at least partially restored to its former glory. The new owners of the building, the Union Council, are slowly improving upon the interior appearance of their new headquarters, and a strange dichotomy of old, faded luxury and new, refurbished style can be seen in the decor of the club, especially in the game room.

The third doorway which leads out of the foyer opens into a hallway with restrooms and ends at the kitchen. The kitchen has been cleaned, but not improved or remodelled at all, as the kindred have little use for it.

When the characters are seated at the table, they will see nine other "people" in the bar room with them. Cliff will serve their (and the Vampires') every need and whim. Jon will tend bar, constantly refilling Colette's glass (with "red wine") as she stares despondently off into space. Elmer will be seated in the shadows of the bar, chomping on his cigar and talking sports with R.J., who will have his feet propped up on another stool as he leans against the bar and smokes a cigarette (and curiously eyes the characters). Burton and Dahlili will noisily be discussing the proper role of blacks in American society (to make music or to overthrow racist Eurocentrism). Every once in a while "AND DON'T CALL ME DOLLY!" will be heard piercing the room.

Finally, Isabella and Jean-Michel, having just finished "dinner," will be seated at the table next to the characters. Both will certainly notice the characters' entrance, but will politely ignore them for the most part. If the characters listen closely, they can hear them discussing the deterioration of Cuba.

Dialogue

Everyone at this gathering (besides the characters, of course) will initially play the charade of the Union Council invitational party. The Vampires will have invitations just like the ones the characters received and will be just as "baffled" about the Council as everyone else. They will use this as a conversation starter to learn more of their prospective Neonates and whether or not they meet the selection criteria. The Ghouls know the plan and will play along the entire evening.

• **Albert** — The characters will be greeted at the door by Albert, the very imposing bouncer of the club. He will demand to see the invitations; once shown them, he will be extremely polite and friendly. If the characters ask why they were invited, Albert will tell them that the Union Council has rented the building and that all its members are to be served and treated with the greatest respect.

• **Cliff** — Cliff will then escort the characters to their table. After all the player characters are seated, Cliff will serve them the meal which they requested on their dinner cards. He is friendly, and quite interested in the "group" that reserved the club this evening. He will question the characters about what exactly the "Union Council's" business is, if the characters don't ask him first. If they claim not to know anything about the Council, he will seem confused, and say that he is sure that's who booked the club for the evening. He will also say that he has been paid quite generously to provide everyone present (including the others) with a good time, and to let him know if they want or need anything. Cliff will be quite concerned that they enjoy everything, and will gladly fetch anything the characters require. He will stop by the table frequently, unless he is reassured that everyone is having a good time.

• **Jon** — The bartender could be a very useful source of information for the characters, as he relishes his role as confidant of his patrons. He will not, of course, tell the characters the true purpose of the evening, but he will scatter cryptic hints in his comments like "Boy, this Union Council sounds great! I bet it could really turn a person's life around!"

• **Burton** — Burton is looking for an artistic companion and is intrigued at the prospect of creating a Neonate of his own, as he has never done so. Anything the characters say about art or music will catch his interest, and he will rush to join any such conversation. His criteria for selecting a Child centers on the artistic interest,

Clans

Each of the following Vampires represents one of the seven clans of the Camarilla. A Clan is basically a family or a bloodline and all the members of a clan generally share common traits. Outward behavior and philosophy, not just the vampiric powers of Disciplines, are often shared by Sire and Child within a Clan. (See pages 67-76 in *Vampire*.)

appreciation and aptitude—if he believes the character has a strong potential in this area, he will choose them. "Yes, I do appreciate the need for extremes in artistic expression, but Heavy Metal just distorts the true, blues heart of Rock n' Roll!"

• **Jean-Michel du Pont-Ville** — He will introduce himself as "Monsieur Jean-Michel du Pont-Ville" in very quickly spoken French, but will say the characters can call him "Mr. duPont." Although he comes across as very proper and has great interests in history and philosophy, his real passions are the occult, voodoo and anything supernatural. If any such subjects arise, he will become very agitated but interested, his eyes will grow wide and intense, and his entire body will exude the exhilaration he feels. If any speak skeptically of such matters, he will become very condescending and haughty towards such an individual (which he does well as he has the bearing of a Victorian gentleman). He will not choose an "apprentice" tonight.

• **Isabella** — The leader of the group, she has a keen interest in the characters and will observe them closely. Isabella will be intrigued by any young mortals who seem to have the class and refinement needed to be a Ventrue. She is looking for a Neonate to learn the ropes of vampiric politics by her side, one who will become a faithful ally in her climb to the top of the political structure. "I came to America with great hopes to help my countrymen, but Kennedy betrayed the trust we had in him. He had no loyalty to the Cuban cause," she'll offer as a line to get the characters to talk politics and loyalty.

• **Delores (Dahlili)** — Delores is looking for a Neonate with a strong desire to change things. She will often interject, "But would you die for it?" when a character is expressing some strong opinion. There is an irony in that if any character feels strongly enough to die for their opinions, she will give them the opportunity. When the time is right, Delores will be the one to explain the real reason for the party. She might begin by speaking of the ultimate empowerment, the chance to see your oppressors fall to dust and that sort of thing, but will

eventually get to the point, with a little help from the others.

• **R. J.** — He will talk mainly about sports, especially the Indians and the Cavaliers, with anyone who shows interest, but he won't force himself on people. He'd rather sit silently than talk "garbage". If given the chance he will wind the conversation to the drought in Cleveland sports and his fatalistic attitude to getting through it. He's looking for a Neonate who can survive for long periods without reward. He will listen sympathetically to someone's complaints about life, but will always have a snappy comeback, like, "That's why I'm a Cavs fan."

• **Colette** — Although she will sit at the bar and look very despondent if left alone, characters will be pleasantly surprised at her vivacious response when approached. She will be excited by just about anything a "new" person says to her, but the more enigmatic and mysterious it is, the more she will be intrigued. She is looking for someone to excite her dreary existence—the stranger the character, the more she will be attracted and tempted to Embrace.

• **Elmer** — Elmer is looking for anyone the others find distasteful to whom he can pass his curse. He is hoping to find a Neonate who is such an outcast, or so utterly unattractive, that they won't mind so much the hideous and painful transformation. Perhaps even someone who would be his ally... Elmer is a warped man, but if a character is very obnoxious at the party, they will undoubtedly "get to know him" much better. He will remain in the shadows of the booth or use his Obfuscate discipline avoid the mortals until after Dahlili's speech.

Ghouls

There are three Ghouls employed at the Sunset Club. Other than the hired chefs (who leave as soon as the meals are prepared) these are the only non-vampiric NPC's in the club. A Ghoul is created when a mortal drinks the blood of a Vampire without first being drained of all mortal blood. They have some vampiric abilities and Disciplines, though they are not affected by sunlight, fire and other banes of vampiric existence. (See page 135 in *Vampire*.)

SCENE TWO: The Embrace

Since the Embrace is such a personal experience, there is no way we can outline fully and detail-by-detail what will happen as the mortals become Neonates. Much of it depends on the roleplaying that goes on between the characters and their potential Sires. Some may express an interest even before coming to the club, some might seduce/be seduced, others might not know until the last second, when they are attacked outright by the forceful Kindred. Play up this scene to the fullest, allowing each character a little private time, perhaps in another room, to go through their individual encounters. At the end of the "dinner party" and immediately preceding the Embrace, Dahlili will make the following speech:

Dahlili's Speech:

"Friends, as you know, we've gathered together under the generosity of the Union Council. For what purpose? Why us? Because we are the Union Council, brothers and sisters. WE have the power to crush our oppressors, to watch as they crumble to dust! WE have the time to grow stronger, the power to throw off these chains and be TRULY free! We surely have an ETERNITY to bathe in the blood of the wicked, the unrighteous, and the prejudiced! Dare you join us? Dare you stand up to the perils that face our society and KNOCK DOWN the walls of oppression? How, you say? Join us, become one of us! Fight the power! We know the true meaning of Empowerment, and that is Kindred. That is Blood! We are born again—immortal! And we have chosen YOU!"

Your players will find out about their new lives in a variety of ways, depending on which Sire chooses them. After being drained of all their mortal blood, and replenished with Vampire Vitae, the characters will find themselves sapped of all strength and willpower. Their Sires will then explain to them that they are now Kindred, the reasons that they were chosen, and their obligations to their Sires. One way to run this is by spending ten minutes or so with each character in a separate area, playing out the role of the Sire before the characters fall into unconsciousness. You could also just explain the basics once, and explain to each player in turn how their particular Sire presented the information.

The Embrace, the Kiss of Unlife

The Embrace is the process of turning a mortal into a Vampire. The Sire completely drains the mortal of blood, and then returns some to them. This can be painful or pleasurable, depending on the situation. In this story, the characters will be not remain conscious too long after the Embrace, being only coherent enough to receive initial instruction from their Sires. When they awaken the next night, they will be ravenously hungry. The Prince is supposed to approve the creation of all Neonates, but these characters have been "born" illegitimately. (See page 135 of *Vampire*.)

It's important at this point to begin the process of convincing any skeptical characters that they really are Vampires. If characters show signs of doubting their new state, bring out the vampiric qualities of their Sires and the Neonates strong connection to them. Remember, the characters are very weak and impressionable in their new state—remind your players of the intense drama of the moment.

1) Burton will most likely offer to jam with anyone who claims to be a musician, though he might just offer to play for any other artistic-type person. He will most likely invite them into the stage area, which is when he will start to hint that there is something really special about his musical talents, saying "It's all in the blood, I guess."

After the Embrace, he will continue to demonstrate his Celerity with tremendously complicated and intense guitar riffs. His stupendous performance probably will be the most moving and dramatic experience the character has ever had. Play up the artistic possibilities open to the Neonate which flow into the character when fed by Burton. As the character consumes more and more blood, he or she will feel a greater and greater ability to recreate these penultimate artistic experiences.

2) Jean-Michel will not make a Neonate tonight, as it takes years of "apprenticeship" for one to learn the mystical ways of the Tremere.

If a player really would like to play a Tremere, have them create their character ahead of time and be at the club as an actual Vampire. Any mortal characters who are enthralled with him at the club will be taken by somebody else.

3) Isabella will wait until after Dahlili's speech before she makes her move. During the speech, she will position herself behind her chosen one(s) and will look deeply into their eyes when the speech is done. She will then Dominate them, telling them to go with her, and will retire to the Office to consummate the relationship. Isabella will use her Dominate and Presence Disciplines liberally while feeding any character she has chosen. While her Neonate is receiving her "life" giving blood, she will instill in them a feeling of loyalty and purpose regarding Isabella and her work.

4) Dahlili is very eloquent and will deliver a powerful speech (see below), strongly reinforced by liberal use of her Presence. By the end of it, the mortals may very probably be strongly yearning to be emulate her. If she has chosen a mortal, she will explicitly ask that person to come to her at the end of her speech, and give themselves up to her by joining her in the Kiss.

A character chosen by Dahlili must rise to the challenge posed by this strident revolutionary. After the character is drained, the tension will rise as she alternately feeds her charge and then pulls back to goad them and attack their beliefs. A character's body will cry out for her blood after an initial taste, and Dahlili will taunt and provoke her Child to stand up for what he believes and for what he wants (i.e., her blood). When she finally feeds her Neonate, he will feel empowered to fight against the system as well as allied with Dahlili in the struggle.

5) R.J. has planned this out for a very long time. Although it is in his Clan's tradition to leave the Fledgling Vampire on their own, R.J. plans to become as friendly as possible with his first Child and be available if real trouble strikes, though not hanging over his young one. A few trials are good for one's soul, after all. Depending on how the evening is progressing, R.J. will either adjourn to another room with his mortal, or wait for Dahlili's speech. When the time comes, though, R.J. will quietly look into the character's eyes and say "I am waiting for

you to join me. I have an eternity to wait, should you need it, but I'd hope we could embark upon this soon. You have the strength to survive. This is your path." It is probably the most he's said about non-sports topics all evening. If all else fails, he will simply attempt to overpower the mortal, and begin the Embrace.

After feeding his Fledgling, R.J. will begin a dramatic transformation. Initially, his eyes begin to radiate a bright red and each finger sprouts a smooth, pointed wolf-claw. As his body transforms, the Gangrel will explain the power of the blood and its proximity to the Beast within. His body will gradually form the shape of a wolf as he explains about Kindred and the Masquerade. When the exquisite reality of his elegant form is finally attained, he will place a paw on the chest of his Childre, stare deeply into his eyes, place his muzzle squarely in his face and say "Welcome to the Pack."

6) Colette sees this event as a last chance to find out if the others really do exist some-

where outside of her mind. She will try to seduce her chosen Neonate if possible, to accentuate the feeling of closeness. If seduction isn't possible, she will try being a friend and supporter to her mortal. Just before the actual Embrace, she will become morbid, and actually weep bloody tears, before whirling on her chosen one with much flash and fang. She will be a truly frightening sight, more than any Sire except Elmer.

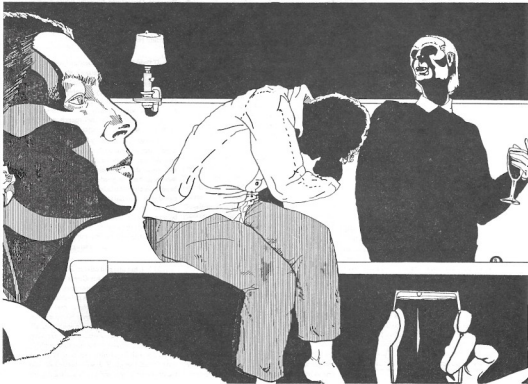
Colette will simply Dominate her Childre while feeding them and convince them that this pain is what they have always sought. Only through the intimacy and trauma of transformation and feeding will they be able to discover their true selves.

7) Elmer is not very interested in niceties, and will strong-arm any mortal he chooses at the end of the speech. He will quickly exit the shadows, grab the victim and lunge for the neck. After he has completely drained his Childre, he

will shove one arm in their face and use the other to pull out a new cigar, which he'll smoke away as he feeds his new accomplice.

He will then harass his Fledgling and alter his Appearance at will, from disappearing to demonstrating the full horror of his form. If the character is not suitably impressed, Elmer will strike the fear of God into his creation, demonstrating his Potence and Strength, perhaps by threatening anyone who acts too surly with a pool table.

This is a very important scene for both the characters' development and the smooth continuation of the story. The Storyteller must convince the characters that their intense relationship and interaction with their Sires is desirable and mentally as well as physically satisfying. It is also important to drive home the all-consuming ecstasy and agony of becoming a Vampire. This may be a good place to end a session, letting the players dwell upon the drama of the moment before playing again.



SCENE THREE: A WAKENING

After being drained and then fed, the Neonates will collapse into unconsciousness after their intense but all too brief interactions with their Sires. The Sires will give each of the Fledglings a contact or some way to reach them if they must, some encouraging the contact more than others. The Neonates will not awaken again until dusk of the next day. Each new Vampire will be comfortably laid out a pool table in the game room of the club. They will be very, very thirsty (see pages 12 and 25 of *Vampire*).

They might wander into the bar and try to drink something, but if they do they will immediately vomit. Quite unpleasant.

Rolling Dice in Vampire

Vampire has a unique system of rolling dice, the object being to roll a high enough number a certain number of times. For example, the rules could call for a Strength + Brawl roll with at least two successes. A success is usually considered rolling a six or higher. If a character's Strength is 2 and Brawl is 3, the player rolls five dice. If the rolls were 4, 3, 7, 9, 10, this would indicate three successes (as three of the rolls were six or higher). Sometimes the difficulty factor (the number or higher which must be rolled for a success) is higher or lower than six depending on the difficulty of the task. Also remember the rule of 1: every one rolled cancels a success. If there are more 1's rolled than successes, it's a botch and the Storyteller can create a fitting failure. (See pages 31-33 in *Vampire*.)

The entire building is empty (and all of the doors are chained and locked) except for the front Office where they will find Cliff, Albert and Jon playing cards. Once Cliff realizes they have awoken, he will attempt to gather them together, relate the tradition to them and answer their questions. The members of the Union Council have been called into meetings with the Lieutenants, who appear to have discovered their clandestine organization, and have left Cliff in charge of the Neonates. Therefore, they've charged Cliff with instilling in the Neonates an initial respect for the Tradition and to help to ease them into the immortal world.

Cliff will begin by stressing the importance of the Masquerade and Domain. It's very important that the Neonates realize they must feed on mortals, yet not let mortals know they exist, and at the same time are often confined to

hunting in a limited area. In order to do this effectively, the group will have to work together. This is a lesson Isabella is interested in teaching the Neonates, as she would like them to develop into a cohesive, effective force she can wield independently of the Lieutenants. So the Childer are thrown straight into the fire: they must hunt in Merionette Park without tipping their cover. They cannot leave the neighborhood (and thus hunt in another's Turf) and cannot break the Masquerade. Anyone who drove to the club will find that their car has been removed by their Sire.

After Cliff has made these two points, he will gladly answer any questions the Neonates have. If you are new to Vampire, you might just decide Cliff knows as much about Vampires as you do (which should be a lot, but certainly not everything). He is supposed to know a great deal and be there to answer the characters' questions.

The Neonates will certainly want to feed before they are overwhelmed by their thirst. In this case, the Sires are not available to help the Fledglings through their first "kills", so each of the Ghouls will feed each character a point of blood a piece, hoping the Council members will return in time to take charge of their Progeny. The Ghouls will not let themselves be drained of more than 4 points each, and will take turns providing blood in case someone needs to be restrained.

Dialogue

It's very possible that the characters will be hostile after they awaken on a pool table, throw up whatever they try to consume and find themselves chained into the club. The Ghouls will try to reason with them, will feed them a little blood and Jon will Dominate them to quiet them down. As soon as the characters receive any blood from the Ghouls, they will immediately flash back to their intense encounter with their Sires. Their thirst for blood and the feeling of their Sires' blood within them will overwhelm them.

If any characters attempt to flee without talking with the Ghouls or refuse their blood, one of the Ghouls will slit a wrist and bleed into a cup. The character will then have to use Willpower to prevent herself from immediately feeding from the open wound. She will also have to make a Frenzy check, with an ease factor of 4. If the character Frenzies, she will immediately run to the cup and drink. If she still does not drink, Jon will Dominate her and Command her to "Drink!"

Frenzy

Frenzy is caused by hunger, anger or fear, and is rolled against the Virtues: Conscience, Self-Control and Courage respectively. Characters may never roll more dice for a Virtue roll than points in their Blood Pool. In this case, that means the characters will only be able roll one die as their Sires left them with one Blood Pool. If a character Frenzies, he will lose control, will no longer be required to make Willpower rolls, and is not penalized for Health Level losses equal to or less than his Stamina. The character will not come out of Frenzy until the end of the Scene unless he tries to control himself. In this case, he must make an extended Willpower roll with an ease factor of 8 or 9 and requiring 2 to 5 successes. (See pages 121-124 in *Vampire*.)

Here is an example of what Cliff knows and can tell the characters:

"First, I must extend the apologies of all your Sires, who could not return to help you through this trying time. The Prince of Cleveland has put out a call to them to appear before him, and it may very well be because of your creations. It is imperative that you listen closely to what I have to say, as your vampiric existence may soon be cut short.

"The Masquerade must not be broken! No mortal can know of your existence, nor may you leave traces of your hunting behind for mortals to find. A few Neonates leaving a trail of bloodless bodies on the streets threatens the existence of all Kindred, and the wrath of the Camarilla will be swift. You have been created without the blessing of the Prince and the enemies of your Sires will quickly put an end to your unives if they discover you. If you break the Masquerade, not even your Sires can aid you. You will surely be destroyed.

"Don't wander far from the club, or you will stray into the Lieutenants' Domain, giving them every right to dispose of you as they see fit. Don't feed on the street if you can help it. For your own sake, be discrete! And above all, stay together. You will need each others' help if you should fall into Frenzy.

"We will help you all we can, but our obligations to your Sires and duties here at the club will prevent us from being able to help you as your Sires would. Come to us if there is an emergency, but keep in mind the Masquerade and our responsibilities in upholding it.

"Oh yes, and make sure you're back before sunrise!"

SCENE FOUR: The UNQUENCHABLE THIRST

The characters will surely need to quench their thirst. The more they try to resist, the more they'll suffer. Without blood, they'll eventually start going into painful, frenzy-like convulsions, totally out of control and potentially doing damage to themselves as well as others. The Storyteller should relate the depth of the characters' thirst, and only build slowly to the frenzied states if need be. It should be very clear to the players that they need blood—and will suffer much in the immediate term without it.

If they think of turning to the Ghouls for more blood than initially offered, remember the physically imposing characters of Albert and Jon. Although the characters might not realize it, Cliff, too, is way too tough (thanks to his Ghoul blood) for any one of the Neonates to tackle in their current condition. If really pressed, Albert will offer his veins to a Neonate who looks very weak and is in a great deal of pain—he has a soft heart and won't stand by too long if someone looks very pathetic. Jon, on the other hand, will be interested in helping any of the characters if they happen to be young, good looking, and female. Chances are, though, that the characters will have to seek more sustenance outside of the Sunset Club.

The neighborhood surrounding the club has deteriorated in recent years, but it still retains much of its working class, ethnic Cleveland feel. Three sides of the Sunset Club are surrounded by a huge cemetery, with Crawford Avenue, a local, dead-end subdivision street, making up the fourth side. Any characters who drove to the club will find their cars have been removed. The Ghouls will not loan the characters a car, and also will prohibit them from feeding on Crawford Avenue (in order to prevent any connection between the Club and their activities). They will also be warned not to stray too far from the Club, as they are weak, unknown Neonates who would be easy prey for Anarchs or those of the Camarilla who have not yet accepted them.

The cemetery is closed (as it is late at night) and therefore there will probably not be any living people within its confines. If the characters decide to search it anyway (perhaps looking for a security guard), they will quickly run into Tim's gang of South Side Punks. (See Encounters.)

The most probable choice would be for the characters to cross the street and enter Merionette Park, a neighborhood in decline. The characters are likely to run into a few people, even at this time of night and a few possibilities are listed. The South Side Punks will also be encountered, preparing to ambush these trespassers as soon as it's convenient. If the characters stick together, we suggest the Storyteller let the group encounter each of the mundane pedestrians (and therefore have a chance to feed) before the Punks attack. However if the group splits up, the punks will be much more likely to ambush one of the characters who is alone, in order to find out more about this threat. It is in the best interests of the Characters to stick together, and

their chances of survival (or at least avoiding serious and aggravated injury) will be much greater if they do so.

• Things for the Storyteller to remember about feeding: Make sure you carefully read and are familiar with pages 117-118 in *Vampire*. While the average human has ten blood pool points, only four blood points may be taken safely from a victim, and taking seven will kill them unless they are immediately hospitalized. Victims will not resist after the first round, as they are drawn into the pleasure of the exchange. Puncture wounds automatically are healed by vampiric saliva, so there is little or no physical evidence of the crime (except, of course, for the loss of blood). Vessels who are allowed to live will remember the incident, although perhaps pleasantly, and will be a major threat to the Masquerade. Vessels who are killed will be investigated thoroughly by the Police. Characters with a Presence score of 3 or more or a Dominate score of 2 or more will be able to convince the victims that nothing other than normal (but wonderfully fulfilling) necking occurred.

Encounters

• The Tails — Two interested parties are keeping an eye on the characters during their first sojourn as Vampires: the Ghouls of the Sunset Club and the South Side Punks. One Ghoul will always remain at the club, but one of the others will stealthily tail a group of Neonates. He will not intervene unless the characters are in major trouble, and then only if the Masquerade is threatened and he has a chance to pull the character away from the conflict and back to the club.

The South Side Punks will tail each Vampire who leaves the club and probably won't be noticed by the characters (it is, after all, the Punks' home turf). If any of the characters venture out alone, the Punks will quickly pull their group together to ambush the hapless victim. If, for any reason, the Neonates decide to return to the Club, the Punks will ambush them on the way back.

• Coming Home From Practice — Two high school girls have been very late at their friend's house practicing for the upcoming Pom Pon tryouts. While they normally don't walk home alone this late at night, they are friendly with the South Side Punks who watch out for many of the "cool" teenagers in the area: hence the girls aren't too worried about being out so late.

As a first encounter, this could severely test the humanity of the characters. The Storyteller should play up how appealing these girls are: they are young and attractive; they have been working out, so their bodies are sweaty, giving rise to an odor full of life and vitality to

the Vampires' probing senses; they are alone, walking down a dark street, apart from any activity, but very noticeable to the Kindred; in short, they are a very attractive target to thirst-craving Neonates.

The two girls will be jogging down the sidewalk, Pom Pons bouncing away! If approached by a group, the girls will at first assume it must be the South Side Punks, and so will not be too afraid. If someone in the group has Auspex and examines the girls with it, they will appear violet (as they are excited about Pom Pon tryouts). One of the girls is wearing a small crucifix. If the characters in the group quickly try to reassure or Dominate the girls, they will be friendly and engage in conversation and can easily fall prey to the blood-thirsty characters. If, however, a single Neonate approaches (or the two of them are not "seduced" at the same time by a group), the second girl will become quite upset, attempt to flee, and alert the neighborhood. The Neonates may also be nervous. Make nervous or jumpy characters roll Self-Control to avoid going into Frenzy if there is anything but the smoothest approach by the group. Any character who seems overly anxious must roll if they come within five feet of the girls.

The girls will be much more wary of an individual or two approaching them at night, since the South Side Punks only travel in larger groups. If the characters are not together, the girls will try to avoid the individuals altogether by crossing the street, turning the corner, or even turning completely around. If the character(s) still follow the girls, they will quickly run to the nearest residential building and begin screaming, which should attract attention fairly quickly.

• A Taste of the Grape — Another typical encounter found in this neighborhood as it deteriorates is one who has had a little too much to drink. Up the street are a number of bars, and more than one patron stumbles home at night to an apartment in Merionette Park. Though a tempting Vessel as he is easy to catch and remembers little of the event, a drunk has a high blood-alcohol content. This means that the Vampires, too, may become a bit tipsy if they feed on such a victim. Keep this in mind for any Dexterity related rolls they need to make after feeding. In this encounter, have a young, stocky, very drunk man come stumbling across the party. He will be very easy to feed from, but taking even one blood point from him will make the character tipsy. If a character drains him entirely, the Neonate will be very drunk. It would be very dangerous if a character frenzied when taking the first blood from the drunk, as the Neonate would then totally empty the victim, be in a frenzied state and totally drunk.

It is important for the characters to stay together here, as well, as a lone character will be very likely to frenzy and destroy the Vessel. If the Neonates are in a group, they can then try

and calm anyone who frenzies (see *Vampire*, page 121).

Feeding from the victim should be pretty easy, unless a single Vampire attempts it, giving the drunk a fighting chance to land a few good blows before being subdued. (He has high Strength [3] and Stamina [3] because of his state, but a low Dexterity [1], and perhaps Brawl [2].)

The group will initially see a man walking/ weaving down the sidewalk towards them. If Auspex is used, his Aura will show shifting, mottled colors (as he is confused: "I know I live around here somewhere!"). He will be easy to approach, but will put up a fight when someone tries to touch him ("Nobody touches Fat Jack! Nobody!"), which should be no problem if the characters work as a group to detain him. The man also reeks of garlic, and any character with Heightened Senses will find it distasteful, but not prohibitive. If a noisy fight ensues, a nosy neighbor will call the police if she sees anything too untoward happening.

• **Fair and Foul** — Although the South Side Punks try to keep an exclusive hold on crime in the area, there are enough unsavory types to cause additional problems, and the characters can run across some. In this case, two young punks, feeling a little high from a party they just left, may decide the Neonates are prime targets for a mugging, especially if the characters are still looking a little weak and disheveled from last night's experience. These two thugs plan to jump from the shadows and pull switchblades. If the group is united and alert, the punks shouldn't be difficult to spot, but they will easily outmaneuver a solitary character. The hoods will most likely put on much bravado, even if the characters don't appear startled or afraid (after all, this is their turf) but won't realize what they're up against until it's too late. As with the drunk, it's possible that these two will have something in their blood stream that may or may not affect the characters (as the Storyteller wishes). These punks have basically the same Abilities, the most important being: Brawl [2], Alertness [2], Dodge [2], Streetwise [3], Melee (Switchblade) [3]. They also have average human Attributes (2's or higher at Storyteller's option) except Wits and/or Dexterity of 3.

These muggers will try to surprise the group from the shadows, but one or both stand a good chance of being noticed by three or four alert Vampires, whereas one or two will almost certainly miss at least one of them. If detected by Auspex, one will appear brown (bitter) and the other purple (aggressive).

• **Turf** — The South Side Punks are the neighborhood gang, though not excessively violent. They are mostly made up of mortals from the neighborhood, but are under the sway of two Anarchs who are looking to expand their Turf. They generally enjoy causing trouble for "the establishment." The Anarchs have noticed Kindred frequenting the Sunset Club (very close to their Haven!) and posted a watch on it every evening. If they receive word of one or two characters venturing from the Club, an ambush will quickly be arranged. If three or four characters sally forth together, they will be watched for awhile and then attacked (or perhaps parlayed with if the characters seem very strong). If the characters appear to be leaving the Turf, the Anarchs will immediately ambush them, since they want very badly to question these newcom-

ers, and will not leave their own Turf to do so. The Anarchs want to discover why the other Kindred are on this Turf, and will fight to the last mortal to capture and question one. Once their compatriots are dispatched and/or generally taken care of, the Anarchs will flee.

The South Side Punks will attack with four mortals leading the charge (or perhaps five if there are four characters). The Anarchs will hold back, ready to finish the intruders off or flee if things go badly. They will have a stake ready to immobilize any character who falls. The mortals will have average Attributes and Abilities (generally 2's), but each will have at least one outstanding physical Attribute (a 3 or even 4 in Strength, Stamina or Dexterity) and perhaps a decent (3) Brawl or Melee score. The punks will initially attack with fists and baseball bats, but will quickly add blades and chains if

things go badly. (For stats on bats use "club," and for chains use "sap," as found on page 148 of *Vampire*.)

When attacking, the Punks will yell something like "Out of our turf, you mangy blood-suckers!" or "Go back to the city, you %*#&% scum!" The group will see about a half-dozen teenaged/young adult men charging out of the shadows towards them, bats in hand. The typical South Side Punk is dressed in cut-up jeans, a leather vest covered with chains and silver studs, a bright green T-shirt (the gang colors), leather boots (with reinforced steel toes) and a green bandana. It is possible the characters may try to talk with their attackers, and some conversation may take place in the middle of melee, but the Punks will not back off at all until they have beaten at least one character badly enough to stake them and carry them off for further questioning.



SCENE FIVE: ARRESTED

The South Side Punks have made a name for themselves and are currently the target of a Police investigation. The cops have kept an eye on the Punks and will arrive at the scene of the fight a few minutes after it breaks out. The Ghouls, too, have been assigned to keep an eye on the Neonates, and they will intervene if the fight goes horrendously badly for their charges. When the Police arrive, chances are they will find a scene where the Punks have been decisively defeated and the Anarchs have fled, leaving the victorious characters standing over the wounded Punks, perhaps even feeding upon them. The characters may try to flee, but the Police are approaching from a number of directions (they've been waiting a long time to catch the Punks) and will probably catch most of the characters off-guard in the middle of combat.

Here is where the characters' past actions might return to haunt them. Unless the Punks have been viciously beaten to death or totally drained of blood, the police will believe stories of self-defense and will only bring in the group for questioning. However, if any of the characters Frenzied during the fight, or the punks were all butchered or the characters left a trail of corpses/victims earlier in the night, the police may want to charge the characters with murder or occult activities. If the two girls or the drunk did not make it home, their families certainly will be worried and have reported it to the police. If any bodies were not carefully hidden, they may well have been uncovered, perhaps even the Punks (who have been spying on the characters) tipped off the cops.

Any character who is brought into the station will at least be questioned for an hour or so. By this time, the night is getting very late and dawn is approaching — something the Vampires need to be very concerned about. If the characters' are charged with any crime, they will be allowed one phone call. They could call family or friends, but chances are they couldn't get enough cash together and get to the station to post bond before the sun rises. If the characters are smart, they will remember that they have their Sires' numbers and the number of the Club, and that they will need fast action to prevent being fried as they exit the station. Even if they were not charged with anything, the police will probably not let them leave alone on foot. (They will threaten to charge them with something — i.e., assault and battery, resisting arrest.) The police do not want these obviously tough and streetwise people (who defeated the Punks) wandering around the streets of their

precinct. The cops will demand that the characters be picked up and go directly home and not return to harass their neighborhood anymore.

If the group does not call their Sires, the Storyteller has a couple of choices: have them be rescued (broken out of jail or picked up) by the Ghouls just before sunrise; or (to really teach them a lesson) have them blindly walk out into the sun and fry to a crisp. The Storyteller is also encouraged to consider yet another twist to the conclusion which will make the characters' fates much more clear-cut.

Bartholomew, the Prince of Cleveland, has been watching the area for awhile and trying to prod one of his Lieutenants to take action against the Anarchs who defy him. Just as the characters are getting desperate (either waiting for their Sires or family to pick them up) and the sun is about to rise, Albert will come in and either pick the characters up (if they are free to go) or try to bail them out. He will probably be fairly unsuccessful in the latter case (and be considering trying to break them out) when two very respectable looking people will walk in and immediately bail the group out. These are two of Bartholomew's Ghouls, and have the power (through political connections as well as vampiric Disciplines) to get the characters out, no matter how much trouble they are in. If everyone was free to go in the first place, they will offer the characters a ride back to the club in a limo (as opposed to Albert's beat up old van). Albert is very respectful of these two and will advise the characters to do whatever they are asked.

If the characters soundly defeated the Anarchs without breaking the Masquerade, the Prince will be mightily pleased and will over look the fact that the Neonates were illegally

created. He will meet with the Union Council and set up the area around the Sunset Club as neutral turf, under the auspices of the Neonates, where all Cleveland Camarilla Kindred can go to escape the vagueness of the Lieutenants' machinations. The Sires will be very happy, the Prince will be satisfied, the characters will be based on some very interesting turf (which all kinds of Vampires will visit), but the Lieutenants will be very upset. This should provide a variety of interesting possibilities, intrigues and storylines for your Chronicle.

On the other hand, a trail of bloodless victims and inconclusive fights with the Anarchs by illegal Neonates gravely threatens the Masquerade and the Prince will react harshly. His Ghouls will take the characters (and Albert who was trying to bail them out) to a meeting with the Lieutenants, summarily pass judgment upon the characters and their Sires, and end the Chronicle then and there. A generous Storyteller might let the characters get away with their unives if they leave Cleveland and promise never to return.

These options for the conclusion of this story give the Storyteller a great deal of leeway in determining the outcome of the events for the characters. The theme of this story has been unity, from the politics of the Union Council to helping each other through the most mundane aspects of a vampiric unlife. We suggest you reward those players who have discovered and tried to work with this theme, as well as those who role-played well. Be generous to those who deserve it, and, we suggest, don't be afraid to be harsh with those who don't — it might not be fun now, but hopefully it will lead to better role-playing and more fun the next time out!

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